

Floor Statement  
War on Terrorism  
March 7, 2003

Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator from Virginia organizing this opportunity to discuss what is obviously one of the most serious issues which we as a nation are facing and which the world is facing; that is, the question of how we address terrorism, and specifically how we address terrorist states such as Iraq .

The leadership of the Senator from Virginia on this point has been long and strong and continuous. I admire the fact that he has given us that leadership, and I appreciate the fact that his service in the Senate and his expertise are brought to bear on this type of a very difficult question.

When we begin to address this issue of terrorism, I think we should start with the source. Let us turn to the words of the man who has basically orchestrated the attacks on the United States, Osama bin Laden, and his intentions and the intentions of the people he directs, and unfortunately encourages. Osama bin Laden, on the issue of weapons of mass destruction, in an interview in 1999 from Time magazine, said the following:

Acquiring weapons for the defense of Muslims is a religious duty. If I have indeed acquired these weapons-- Weapons of mass destruction--then I thank God for enabling me to do so. And if I seek to acquire these weapons, I am carrying out a duty. It would be a sin for Muslims not to try to possess the weapons that would prevent the infidels from inflicting harm on Muslims.

In a religious order he states:

We, with Allah's help, call on every Muslim who believes in Allah and who wishes to be rewarded to comply with Allah's order to kill Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it. The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies, civilians and military, is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it.

These are the words of a fanatic who has a purpose. We have seen the execution of his purpose in the attacks on Americans, with thousands dying in New York and others here in Washington, military men and women in Yemen, and in our Foreign Service personnel in Africa.

The question becomes: From whom would he obtain these weapons of destruction? It is clear that one of the core sources of weapons of mass destruction is terrorist states which are producing those weapons of mass destruction--states which act outside the responsibility of the civilized world.

The state which has most flagrantly pursued that course of action is, of course, Iraq . They have weapons of mass destruction. That has been confirmed beyond question--biological and chemical--and they clearly are trying to develop nuclear. More importantly, Saddam Hussein has used those weapons not only against what he perceives as an enemy--the Iranians--but against his

own people. He has killed thousands of his own people and tens of thousands of Iranians using weapons of mass destruction--chemical weapons.

We know there are literally tons of Vx gas and pounds of anthrax which are unaccounted for and which cannot be found--and which are in the possession of Saddam Hussein. Should they fall into the hands of Osama bin Laden, it is very clear from his own words that they would be used against us here in the United States, and the implications are staggering. If they were to be dispersed in any number of ways, tens of thousands of Americans might be harmed and possibly even die.

The United Nations has equally recognized that Saddam Hussein is a threat to the civilized world, and a number of resolutions have been passed by the United Nations calling for action to be taken by Saddam Hussein and his regime to comply with international law.

In April 1991, almost 12 years ago, the U.N. Security Council decided in Security Council Resolution 687 that Iraq shall unconditionally accept, under international supervision, the destruction, removal, or rendering harmless of its weapons of mass destruction, and ballistic missiles with a range over 150 kilometers. It further required Iraq to make a declaration within 15 days of the location, amounts, and types of such items.

Twelve years ago that resolution was passed. It is uncomplished with. It has been ignored. It has been intentionally obfuscated by Saddam Hussein.

In August 1991, Security Council Resolution 707 demanded that Iraq provide, without further delay, full, final, and complete disclosure of its proscribed weapons and programs as required by the previous resolution.

That resolution has been ignored, obfuscated, undercut, and actively avoided by Saddam Hussein's regime.

In June 1996, Security Council Resolution 1060 deplored the refusal of the Iraqi authorities to allow access to sites designated by the Special Commission, which constituted a clear violation of three previous resolutions.

That resolution has been ignored, obfuscated, and undercut by Saddam Hussein, and intentionally undermined.

In June 1997, Security Council Resolution 1115 condemned Iraq's actions and demanded Iraq allow UNSCOM's team immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to any sites for inspections, and officials for interviews by UNSCOM. Again, the resolution has been ignored, undermined, and actively obfuscated and circumvented by Saddam Hussein.

In October 1997, Security Council Resolution 1134 demanded that Iraq cooperate fully with the Special Commission and demanded also that Iraq, without delay, allow the inspection teams immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to any and all areas, facilities, equipment,

records, as well as to persons whom the inspectors wish to interview.

The resolution has been ignored, undermined, and actively obfuscated by Saddam Hussein.

In November 1997, Security Council Resolution 1137 condemned the continued violations by Iraq, its tampering with monitoring cameras of the Special Commission, and demanded that Iraq cooperate fully, and immediately.

That was in 1997. And there has been no immediate cooperation. In fact, there have been active--active--attempts to interfere with and undermine that resolution.

In March 1998, Security Council Resolution 1154 stressed that Iraq must accord immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to the Special Commission, and that any violation would result in the severest consequences for Iraq.

Again, Iraq has ignored the resolution and actively worked to undermine it.

In November 1998, Security Council Resolution 1205 condemned the decision by Iraq to cease cooperation with the Special Commission as a flagrant violation of Resolution 687 and other resolutions.

In November 2002, Security Council Resolution 1441, which was unanimously approved, decided that Iraq has been and remains in material breach of its obligations under relevant resolutions and decided to afford Iraq, by this resolution, a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations under the relevant resolutions.

Resolution 1441 has been ignored, obfuscated, and actively--actively--undermined by Saddam Hussein and his regime.

There can be no question--absolutely no question--but that Saddam Hussein and his regime in Iraq continued to possess weapons of mass destruction, continued to hide those weapons from the inspectors, continued to violate resolution after resolution of the world community, as presented by the United Nations, and represents a clear and present and immediate threat not only to its neighbors, but more specifically to us, the United States.

There are some in the world community, obviously--mostly in Europe--some of our allies, who, for whatever their personal reasons or whatever their national interests, have decided Saddam Hussein does not represent the threat we know he is. I might even recall the words of Washington when I think of that. Washington advised us, of course: Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice? There are interests there that are not ours. But in the end our purpose must be our national security and the security of our people.

It was not, of course, Berlin or France or Paris that was attacked. It was New York City that was attacked. As a result, it is America that is at risk.

Former President Clinton made it very clear he understood the threat of Saddam Hussein. He has described Iraq as a "rogue state with weapons of mass destruction ready to use them or provide them to terrorists, drug traffickers or organized criminals who travel the world among us unnoticed." He went on to imagine: What if Saddam fails to comply with the U.N. resolutions and we fail to act, or we take some ambiguous third course, which gives him yet another opportunity to develop this program of weapons of mass destruction? Mr. Clinton answered his own question by saying:

Well, [Saddam] will conclude that the international community has lost its will. He will then conclude that he can go right on and do more to rebuild an arsenal of devastating destruction. And someday, some way, I guarantee you he'll use the arsenal. And I think every one of you who's worked on this for any length of time believes that, too.

That was President Clinton.

Last night, President Bush made it very clear that he understands his purpose as President, his responsibility as Commander in Chief, but more importantly, his responsibility as a leader of the free world, and the protector of the interests of the American people and the lives of Americans, must involve the disarmament of Iraq .

There can be no question about that. Iraq must be disarmed. We are engaged in a war. Some on the other side have said or implied there is no war and, therefore, we should not go to war. But when our buildings were attacked and our people died in New York, and when our people died in Washington, and when our sailors were killed in Yemen, and our Foreign Service people were killed in Africa, clearly, those were acts of war directed at us and at our people.

Were this the 19th century or well into the 20th century, when despots such as Saddam Hussein also existed--all through time there have been despots--then maybe we could take a more casual or leisurely approach to this, and maybe we could live by the code of some of our European allies: That we simply will do business with them and hope they go away. But those times no longer exist.

Today, when a rogue nation, led by a criminal individual, attains weapons of mass destruction, the death and destruction which they can level on people who they perceive as their enemies is overwhelming. The smoking gun is no longer a single bullet. The smoking gun may be a nuclear bomb or a biological weapon or a chemical attack which kills tens of thousands of Americans.

We cannot wait for the smoking gun. We know the weapons exist. We know the person who controls those weapons is fundamentally evil. And we know the people who want to attain those weapons have already killed thousands of Americans. We must take action.

So I congratulate and support our President as he moves forward to make it unquestionably clear we will not tolerate an Iraq that has weapons of mass destruction, and we will do what is necessary to protect our Nation and our people and the freedom which we enjoy.

Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator from Virginia granting me this time. I yield the floor.